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S E C R E T ANKARA 002045

SIPDIS

DEPT OF JUSTICE FOR DAAG/CRM SWARTZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/25/2028
TAGS: PTER PREL PGOV IZ SY EU TU

SUBJECT: TURKEY WELCOMES U.S. CT DIALOGUE PROPOSAL, URGES
CLOSER COOPERATION

REF: A. ANKARA 394
1B. ANKARA 395

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Doug Silliman. Reasons: 4 (b)(d).

¶1. (S) Summary. S/CT Dell Dailey urged Turkey November 14 to agree to an annual high-level counterterrorism (CT) dialogue, pressed it to use its influence with Syria to halt the transit of foreign terrorists and asked it to positively respond to earlier U.S. information-sharing proposals. Interior U/S Gunes, MFA U/S Apakan and others asked for U.S. help in &eliminating⁸ the PKK in northern Iraq. Apakan welcomed the U.S. CT dialogue proposal, while Gunes, who has been tasked with standing up an entity to coordinate Turkey's interagency intelligence efforts, welcomed Dailey's offer to share U.S. &lessons learned.⁸ The Turks thanked Dailey for U.S. efforts to halt PKK-related activities in Europe and described Turkey's own efforts with the Euros. MFA Acting DG Ozyildiz noted Turkey would make counterterrorism a focus of its tenure as a non-permanent UNSC member. He also reported Turkey is examining how the various U.S. information-sharing proposals would fit into Turkey's legislation. End summary.

¶2. (C) The State Department's Coordinator for Counterterrorism (S/CT), Ambassador Dell Dailey, met November 14 with Turkish Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Ertugrul Apakan, Undersecretary for Interior Affairs Osman Gunes, Undersecretary of Justice Aykut Kilic, MFA Acting Director General of Security Affairs Inan Ozyildiz, Turkish National Police (TNP) Deputy Director General Ali Kolat and Colonel Ertugrul Gazi Ozkurkcu, Director of the NATO Center of Excellence-Defense Against Terrorism (COE/DAT). He also met with ODC Chief Maj. Gen. Eric Rosborg and visited the Combined Intelligence Fusion Center (CIFC). Amb. Dailey was accompanied in all meetings by S/CT officer Elizabeth Ingalls, Regional CT Coordinator Carol Reynolds and Poloff Jason Arvey. LEGATT Dan Guerrero, RLA Carolyn Delaney, and Embassy interpreter Suheyla Tayla also joined appropriate meetings.

¶3. (C) In all meetings, Amb. Dailey expressed his understanding of the priority Turkey places on its fight against the PKK, stressed that the incoming administration would prioritize the fight against terrorism as least as

highly as the current administration and renewed the USG commitment to further strengthen counterterrorism (CT) cooperation, including S/CT efforts to persuade our European partners to find ways to cut off PKK funding operations in Europe. He shared a U.S. proposal to establish an annual Senior-level Counterterrorism Dialogue with Turkey; such a dialogue would raise the level of CT consultations and broaden interagency participation. He applauded Turkey's efforts to go beyond kinetic responses to the PKK and to &win the hearts⁸ of the Kurds by addressing systemic issues.

¶4. (S) In dialogue with all interlocutors, Amb. Dailey noted Turkey's attractive location as a transit route for Al Qaeda (AQ) and other terrorist organizations, not only to and from Iraq but also to the Afghanistan/Pakistan region. He shared information on the flow of foreign terrorists into Iraq, including through Turkey, and pointed out that foreign terrorists are responsible for 90 percent of deaths through suicide bombing in Iraq and for 15-20 percent of all attacks. Dailey expressed concern that foreign fighters would return to home countries, such as Turkey, or continue the fight elsewhere. He urged Turkish officials to use their influence to persuade Syria to control its borders more tightly and to take more forceful actions against foreign terrorist facilitators operating in Syria. Amb. Dailey pressed his interlocutors to respond favorably to earlier U.S. information-sharing proposals (PISCES, HSPD-6, API/PNR and biometric data sharing). He separately urged Turkey to work with our Resident Legal Advisor to strengthen its CT legislation in order to eliminate vulnerabilities and loopholes. He also inquired about Turkey's reported plans to establish an Undersecretary within the Minister of the

Interior to coordinate interagency messaging against the PKK and horizontal integration of intelligence, and offered to share U.S. &lessons learned.⁸

Interior Ministry Undersecretary Osman Gunes

¶5. (C) U.S.-Turkey CT cooperation has been &extremely good⁸ since the November 5, 2007 meeting between President Bush and Prime Minister Erdogan, Interior U/S Gunes observed, particularly in the area of intelligence sharing. Nonetheless, the PKK continues to enjoy safe haven in northern Iraq and to receive support there. Turkey expects U.S. support in urging the Iraqi government to eliminate PKK elements in northern Iraq, he stated. Turkey also expects the PKK to try to raise tensions as the March 2009 local elections approach and requested closer U.S. cooperation in the coming months. Gunes noted the PKK still has a broad support network in Europe, providing money, logistics, and &propaganda⁸ outlets. Turkey would like more US cooperation and support in winning over reluctant European governments to the cause of shutting down PKK enterprises within their borders.

¶6. (C) Al Qaeda is as great a threat to Turkey as the PKK, Gunes continued. Within the past year, Turkey had carried out ten operations against AQ, and the group is now feeling &uneasy.⁸ It had gotten the message, Gunes asserted, that Turkey will not tolerate AQ activities in Turkey. Turning to Syria, Gunes said Turkey is very sensitive about border security and has urged Syria to establish border outposts to protect against possible terrorist infiltration. While the Syrians had joked &We trust you Turkish⁸ to protect the border, Gunes reported Syria subsequently began to set up border posts. Gunes assured Amb. Dailey that Turkey raises the border issue each time it meets with the Syrians.

¶7. (C) Gunes welcomed Dailey's offer to share &lessons learned⁸ from U.S. efforts to integrate intelligence among government agencies through the establishment of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), noting that he had been tasked with setting up the new CT interagency entity and that a high-level meeting would take place that afternoon to discuss the matter. Amb. Dailey offered to have a U.S. team of experts from NCTC visit Turkey to explain U.S. experience or to host a Turkish team's visit to the United States.

Gunes thanked the Ambassador for the offer (and promised to follow up). Dailey also offered up his Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS) to travel to European capitals to solicit their assistance in curtailing PKK financing.

MFA U/S Apakan, Acting Security Affairs DG Ozyildiz

¶ 8. (C) U/S Apakan expressed appreciation for enhanced U.S.-Turkey CT cooperation since November 5, 2007. Echoing Interior U/S Gunes, Apakan pressed for more U.S. help to persuade the Government of Iraq and the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) to eliminate the PKK in northern Iraq. He asked the U.S. to use its influence to that end in the upcoming November 19 Tripartite meeting (GOT-USG-GOI) and to follow up with KRG leader Barzani. Separately, Iraq and Turkey are close to finalizing a CT agreement which will provide a framework for CT cooperation. Turkey also hopes to conclude a military cooperation agreement with Iraq that would provide military training, in support of U.S. efforts.

¶ 9. (C) Turkey continues to urge its European partners to strengthen measures against PKK-affiliates in Europe, Apakan reported. Prime Minister Erdogan had recently sent confidential letters to counterparts in Sweden, the UK, France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Denmark and the Netherlands asking for stronger steps against the PKK. Turkey and Belgium had held a &quiet8 interagency (MFA, MOI and MOJ) meeting in Istanbul and would meet again in early 2009; they were making systematic progress. Denmark sent judicial and prosecutorial representatives to Turkey to discuss ROJ-TV and suggested an Action Plan. The UK and Turkey have a bilateral agreement for consultations and are making some progress in

addressing issues of concern to Turkey. Sweden has agreed to increase bilateral contacts. The MOJs of France and Turkey are also cooperating and France has taken some measures against the PKK. Italy, too, is showing a new spirit of cooperation. Switzerland, which did not receive a letter, has also taken limited steps against the PKK. In summation, Apakan said the U.S. is working effectively with European partners to reduce logistic support for the PKK and Turkey is grateful.

¶ 10. (S) The U.S. and Turkey also enjoy solid cooperation between relevant agencies in the fight against Al Qaeda, Apakan stated. Picking up on the matter of cooperation against AQ, Amb. Dailey discussed the deportation to Saudi Arabia of a foreign terrorist facilitator whom the Turks had picked up on false document charges. In response to Amb. Dailey's proposal for an enhanced CT dialogue, Apakan said Turkey welcomes more CT cooperation in all areas. He concluded the conversation by reiterating his early appeal for U.S. assistance in eliciting greater GOI and KRG cooperation in eliminating the PKK in northern Iraq.

¶ 11. (C) In an earlier conversation, Acting Director General for Security Affairs Inan Ozyildiz previewed many of the topics raised by U/S Apakan. Ozyildiz noted that US-Turkish intelligence sharing has been instrumental in fighting the PKK, but the PKK is still strong, with some 3,000 militants in Iraq capable of carrying out attacks inside Turkey with heavy weapons. He also noted that the Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK), an Iranian offshoot of the PKK, has called off its struggle against Iran to focus on Turkey. PKK survival in Iraq is directly dependent on PKK funding, propaganda, and recruitment in Europe. Ozyildiz expressed gratitude for former S/CT PDAS Urbancic's efforts to lobby support from European governments in combating these sources of support (Ref B), and hoped that the US government would continue in such efforts. Ambassador Dailey committed to maintaining S/CT's efforts in Europe.

¶ 12. (C) Separately, Ozyildiz expressed appreciation for the July 2008 Istanbul conference that brought together prosecutors from Turkey, several key European countries and Iraq to discuss extradition, and hoped the exercise could be repeated. He also thanked the U.S. for naming the PKK as a

&drug kingpin.8 Turkey remains &very vigilant8 against Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups. Ozyildiz acknowledged increased AQ activity in Turkey and said Turkey would cooperate with the U.S. against it. On Syria, he noted U.S. concerns concerning the transit of foreign terrorists and promised to pass the message to the Syrians. Turkey also intends to make counterterrorism a focus of its tenure as a non-permanent UNSC member, he observed. Returning to bilateral issues, Ozyildiz said Turkey continues to study the various information-sharing proposals presented by the United States to determine how they would fit into Turkey,s legislation. &We will see what we can do,8 he stated.

Justice Ministry Undersecretary Aykut Kilic

¶13. (S) Justice U/S Ayput Kilic was open to continuing dialogue on Turkey,s counterterrorism legislation, but believed that current laws are adequate. Since Turkey is party to all counterterrorism conventions and the Turkish constitution regards ratified international instruments to have the force and effect of law, there should be no barriers to effective prosecution of transiting terrorists, he argued. He pointed to the case of Imad, a Saudi foreign terrorist facilitator: &If Turkish law would not allow us to deport Imad to Saudi Arabia, we would have turned to international agreements to do so.8 Pressed to provide an example where Turkey had applied international conventions or protocols in a CT case, he acknowledged this approach had not yet been tested. Kilic expressed appreciation for the July roundtable on extradition and was receptive to the idea of CT meetings funded by S/CT and hosted by Turkey at the NATO-COE/DAT to bring together regional law enforcement and judicial officials.

TNP Deputy Director General Ali Kolat

¶14. (C) DDG Kolat was receptive to Amb. Dailey,s proposals concerning the establishment of an annual bilateral dialogue and implementing the information-sharing systems, and said the proposals would be conveyed up the chain of command for evaluation. He praised cooperation with the FBI, CIA, and DEA. He also shared U.S. concerns about Syria, but commented that so much of the TNP,s assets are focused on fighting the PKK directly, it has little time for addressing the Syria issue. Like his colleagues, Kolat expressed appreciation for U.S. support against the PKK and requested further support to eliminate the PKK in northern Iraq. In response to an inquiry about the status of the newly proposed Security Undersecretariat, Kolat stated that its status was still unclear, but that having a single organization coordinating counterterrorism policy would be a positive change.

¶15. (U) S/CT Dailey cleared this message.

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